

# JOCKEY AND OTHER STORIES

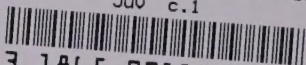
OF BOY LIFE ON A SOUTHERN FARM



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# JOCKEY AND OTHER STORIES

OF BOY-LIFE ON A SOUTHERN FARM

BY  
T. OREGON LAWTON

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GREENVILLE, S. C.

1925

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## PREFACE

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When our children were little folks they came frequently at bedtime and said, "Papa, tell us about when you were a boy", and so many true stories of our boyhood days on the farm were told. As they grew to be older they insisted that I put these stories in print. Finding a few spare days in the summer of 1924 I applied myself to the task, being urged on by my good wife as well as my faithful co-worker, Miss Bryant, who at odd times, and without letting the children in on the secret, took the dictation. If there is any credit due anyone give it to them; if any blame charge it to me.

I wish to thank my lifelong friend, Harry Watson, as well as Mr. Ambrose Gonzales and J. C. Keys for their encouragement and help, while all of us are under obligations to our esteemed friend and townsman, Mr. C. A. David, who drew the funny pictures.

The stories are true and told as I remember them. They happened around our boyhood home in Hampton County, South Carolina. My original plan was to print only a few copies for "home consumption", but through the encouragement of friends who read the manuscript, decided to give them a wider circulation. If I have succeeded in giving an hour of wholesome entertainment to red-blooded boys and girls, I am satisfied, if more than this then all the better.

If this little volume must be dedicated here goes—to Sam and Mary, Frances and Max, the children to whom the stories were first told, to little "Bill", our first grandchild, and to all the boys and girls everywhere who love the great out-of-doors.

Affectionately,

THE AUTHOR.

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## CHAPTER I

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### THE ALLIGATOR STORY

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**B**OYS WERE boys, when I was a boy. We didn't have moving picture shows then, at least not on the screen. Ours were living shows, and we were the players. Nothing daunted us. We learned early in life never to give up.

There were numbers of ponds nearby, the largest of which we called Big Pond. On the muddy Savannah River, fifteen miles away, two river steamers, the "Katie" and the "Ethel", plied. Our cotton was hauled there, and it was our delight to go with the Negro driver on these all-day trips to the river. Many exciting times we had, especially in the swamps, where the road was a rough corduroy and where the bales frequently fell off in the mud. To be a steamboat pilot or captain was our highest ambition and to satisfy this we decided to build two boats of our own. Father and a nearby neighbor each bought a mowing machine, the parts of which were shipped in long boxes, about two feet wide, six feet long and twelve inches deep. Father gave us his box and we bought the other for a dollar. These we purposed to convert into boats. Using rosin mixed with cotton, we "chinked" the cracks, and with two long clapboard shingles nailed in front to cut the water, and two across the back for seats, the "Katie" and "Ethel" were soon launched. A real wharf was built out several feet into the water along which the boats were tied when not in use. Big Pond was also our favorite swimming hole.

Early one morning while we were out watching the plough boys harness their mules, William Dublin called out to us, "Look yoh, yunnuh boys bes' min' how yunnah go in dat Big Pond swimmin'. I seen a *great big 'gator* in da yestiddy." "What, William, you saw an alligator in Big Pond?" "Yes, sah, I sho did; 'e der swim on top sunnin' hisself, en he sho is big 'nuf to eat yunnuh up. Mine now, I done tol' yer, an' yer bes' keep out dat pon'." "Great peace, boys, what about that!" We rushed to Father, told him what William had said, and asked permission to go down and kill that 'gator. "No", said Father, "not until Saturday. You boys must go to school." Father's word was law and there was no use trying to persuade him to the contrary.

It looked like Saturday would never come, but finally with muzzle-loading gun, which Father loaded for us we were off for Big Pond. There were four of us, Maner, ten years old; I came next, nine; then Raz, seven; and Herb, five. Think of it, four youngsters this size starting out with a loaded shot gun, to kill an alligator all by themselves, and the alligator big enough, so William said, to swallow any of us!! Maner was afraid to risk a shot, so he suggested that I take the gun. Across the fields and through the woods we went, then into the field beyond along the edge of which we walked and at times ran, in our eagerness to kill this intruder. When we got nearly to the pond, we slowed down. The three boys behind me followed a few steps back, and carefully we picked our way through the woods, lest we should step upon some dry stick and frighten the alligator and miss the shot. When we got nearly to the water's edge,





“Whew-ouu boys, shee-e-e— look yonder— g-r-e-a-t peace, aint h-e a b-i-g o-n-e!!!” “Don’t miss him, Orry’’, as I raised the gun, taking good aim—but for the life of me, I could not steady that gun. The muzzle of it fairly wobbled. The old ’gator just lay there as if he didn’t mind. Perhaps he had seen boys before, but finally in my desperation I pulled down on the trigger, shooting at least three feet above his head. To our amazement the alligator never moved, but lay right there. We had only one more load in our gun. What were we to do! We held a council of war, and saw that nothing we did seemed to disturb his peaceful rest. Finally, after taking his own good time, he swam over to the middle of the pond. Here, after a pause, he went down near the root of a cypress tree. Another council, and it was decided that Maner and I should take the boat and gun and go after him. Maner paddled, and I stayed on guard, with the gun across my lap. Soon we were right at the place where he disappeared under the water. Suddenly and without warning, his great head burst through the water, *right at the boat!* Instantly our last shot rang out, with a loud *boom!* and a tremendous *splash*, as the load went straight to the mark! We could see plainly that we had hit him,—the water was stained with blood. We turned the boat around directly over where he sank, took the paddle and pushed it down into the water, to see if we could touch him. Another tremendous splash! as the mad creature, half dead, flew into a rage and drenched us with water, dashing it up with his tail and proving that he was not dead at all. With might and main we pulled for shore.

Ammunition gone, and a doubtful chance of seeing him again, we went home.

Father hearing our story agreed to let us follow up the hunt Monday afternoon. Our school was five miles away, but old Jockey, the ox which we drove made a record run for home that next Monday afternoon. Getting the gun, we hurried again down to the old pond. This time we were bolder. We would have been better off had we left the gun, for we didn't need it, and we had our load going back home. There, floating at the same spot, but this time up-side-down, *we saw the old alligator*, his four feet up in the air, *dead!!* Into the boat again we went, and while Maner paddled, I held one of the alligator's feet, towing him to shore. He was too heavy for us, and we were forced to call for help. Two Negro boys hoeing cotton nearby joined us, and after a tiresome journey and many changing of sides to rest our hands, we *brought home the bacon.*

## CHAPTER II

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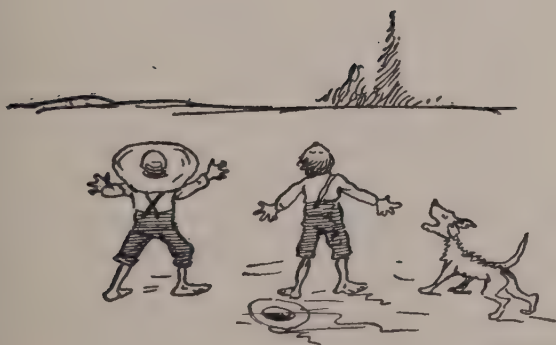
### IT DOESN'T PAY TO GIVE UP

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**B**URPEE was a shepherd dog. When he first came to our home, he was just a little round ball of fur and fire. He was into everything, and kept us amused with his pranks. We soon took him on tramps with us across the fields and woods, and he became our constant companion. Presently he learned the ways of the little animal folk and birds as well.

Once while I was riding behind Father on old Snaps, we were suddenly surprised by a terrifying bark from Burpee, and a hurried flight from a clump of thick bushes as a wild turkey flew up in front of the horse! Burpee had trailed the turkey and flushed it. Snaps was frightened and would not stand for the shot which Father attempted in spite of her, wounding the turkey, but failing to bring it down.

This good dog frequently found birds when Father was hunting with him, but he knew better when out with the boys. Rabbits and squirrels were our delight and Burpee seemed to know this. He would flush a covey of birds if he happened upon them but he gave his best attention to rabbits and squirrels when hunting with us. We were quite young when Burpee first came to live with us, and Brother or Warner were the only ones whom Father would allow to shoot the gun. One afternoon early in September, we decided to take Burpee for a hunt about the place. We tried both Brother and Warner but could not persuade them to go with us. We were indignant and just to show them that we could get along without them, called



the dog and started out. Down the Nixville Road we tramped, until we came to the woods across which we swept. Burpee was in high spirits and it was not long until we flushed a big covey of quail. "Ah-ha," we all chimed in, "when they hear that they'll wish they had come." "Oo-ee, there must have been twenty in that covey, but just let them go", and on we went. A few minutes later we heard old Burp's sharp, snappy bark as he flew after a cottontail, a glimpse of which we got just as he dashed across a small opening in the bushes. Away we went with the chase, doing our best to catch up with the two. We were making good headway when wow!! into a stump hole Maner fell, and it took our best side stepping to avoid piling on top of him, for we were right close on his heels. By the time we pulled ourselves together, the rabbit was gone and Burpee was back again, his tongue hanging out, while he lay at our feet and panted for dear life. The woods were dry, many ponds having disappeared with the coming of the drouth. After resting a bit and encouraging each other with something else to make our older brothers regret their staying away, we took up the hunt again. "A covey of birds and a rabbit!! Won't they be sorry they didn't come!! All right, boys, let's go right on."

We soon came to a pond completely dried up, and after hunting through the cypress trees heard old Burp' again, this time right at us, and with his sharp but doubled-up bark, "Woo-woo", we knew he had treed. Looking up over our heads, what do you think we saw? A g-r-e-a-t b-i-g f-o-x s-q-u-i-r-r-e-l. Most of you have seen gray squirrels, or cat squirrels, but very few, if any, have ever seen a fox squirrel. These



larger squirrels are not found except along the coast, and very few even there any more. They are several times larger than the common gray squirrel, and are generally found in the tallest trees, and so with this one. Away up in the top of a tall cypress, but clearly in view he clung with all four feet and watched our movements below. "Great peace, boys, what will they say now? Ah-ha, we told them they had better come. Goodness sakes, if we just had the gun!! What must we do?" We walked around the tree and looked up until our necks ached, still the big squirrel hung on, and apparently did not move a muscle. "Let's make him move," someone shouted, "don't let's leave him up there, looking at us." Arming ourselves with stout sticks and yelling at the top of our voices we beat upon the trunk of the tree with might and main. Burpee taking fresh courage, joined in the chorus. Evidently the squirrel thought that we were cutting down the tree under him, for he moved his head uneasily, this side and that, and crawled out a little farther on the limb. That helped our feelings and we renewed the attack, yelling like young demons as we hit the tree harder than ever. Again he moved, and this time so near the end of the limb that it bent under his weight. Not far away stood another cypress tree. Was he fixing to jump? "Hollow, boys, hollow!! Let's make him jump! Ye-e-e, catch him, Burp', he's going to jump—watch him boys,—hit it again!!" "There he goes", as the squirrel made a lunge for a nearby tree. It was a desperate jump, that big squirrel, with four legs spread out in mid air, his long bushy tail flowing behind. "But look! *he missed it!*" Down he came through the air, on that

long and fatal fall! He hit the ground with a *thump*, and in less time than it takes to tell it, the shepherd dog and four little boys were on top of him.

It never pays to give up anything worth-while. With a shout of triumph the hunt ended and home we sped, taking turns carrying our trophy. Up to Brother and Warner we marched and with pride said, "All right, look what we got anyhow." Of course they were sorry they didn't go with us, and the next time we went we had the gun for Brother and Warner both came along.



## CHAPTER III

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### BLACK JOE AND THE RAT

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ONE OF the boys in our home named Joe, and a decided brunette, was nick-named "Black-Joe". His father and mother died when he was quite a little fellow, so he came to live with us. It was not long before we all looked upon him as one of the boys, a regular fellow. Mother's room was near the back of the house, adjoining which there was a shed-room where we slept until we grew to be ten or twelve years old. This was a long room, about twelve feet wide and twenty feet long, an open fire place at one end and a big closet at the other. Next to the closet, the door opened on the back porch, where Burpee, the good old shepherd dog, slept and around the open fire place we spent many happy hours in the early evenings. In the fall of the year, after doing the chores we invariably brought an armful of sugar cane, and around the fire after supper, we sat and chewed sugar cane and enjoyed ourselves generally.

All of us were great rat hunters, and to this day I bear on my little finger a scar made by a big rat, which I caught in the corn crib one day. The corn was getting low, and there being boys a plenty, we stationed one at each corner of the room and some on the outside to watch the holes through which we knew they would run. The others of the crowd turned in and moved the pile of corn knowing that near the bottom a lively bunch of rats would await the moving of the last few bushels, and then, oh joy!

there would be a rat-killing time in that old barn! On this particular occasion, I was taking my stand in a cow stall adjoining the barn, there patiently waiting for the boys to move the corn. After a little I heard them yell in a chorus, "Look out, they are coming", and before I could make ready rats were pouring out that hole like water out of a jug. I got a big one in each hand but the fellow in my right hand also got me. Fastening its teeth in the end of my little finger I could not shake it loose, but dashing the other one against the wall I tore loose its hold on my finger, at the same time tearing my flesh badly. I killed them both, though.

Shortly after this some of the boys in the neighborhood bought some white rats, and the fad spread. We soon possessed a pair, which we admired very much. They had pink eyes and cunning ways. We kept them in our bed room, enclosed in a wire cage, and fed them on a variety of food, wondering at times what there was that a rat wouldn't eat.

Early one morning, just as we were ready to dress, Joe walked over to the cage and, after teasing the rats for awhile, said, "I wonder if they would bite my tongue?" Some mischievous chap among us, in a serious vein said, "Try it, Joe", and with that he stuck his tongue into the cage. Quick as a flash one of the rats fastened its teeth in Joe's tongue. The broken English that rent the air, as he tried to yell with his tongue fastened inside the cage, was most amusing to us and terrifying to mother and father next door. Father dashed into the room and cried, "What is the matter in here?" He found to his amusement Joe's terrible predicament. For some un-

accountable reason, possibly because of the unearthly shrieks, the rat turned loose but the blood spurted for a long time. Joe was chagrined beyond description and it remained a sore point with him long after the sore on the point of his tongue had healed. We always thought of this incident with a round of laughter, many times rolling over and over and laughing until we cried. Joe found out to his utter satisfaction that rats like little boys' tongues.



## CHAPTER IV

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### A GHOST STORY

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**F**ATHER was full of mischief and enjoyed a practical joke. Sister Katie was an adopted sister who came as a little girl to live with Father and Mother shortly after their marriage. Mother's bed room was at the back of the house on the right going in; it could also be reached from a door which opened on the porch.



One night after all had retired Father decided to play a joke on Sister Katie. It was summer time and he didn't need to dress, but taking his shoes in his hands he tiptoed out of his room to the side porch and on around to the front as you can see by a glance at the picture of our home. Going down the front steps quietly he then slipped his shoes on and came stamp-



ing up the steps, walked to the front door and knocked lustily. He guessed right for Sister Katie thought it was one of her beaux and going to the head of the staircase called down to Mother telling her that there was someone at the front door. Father knocked again, but he missed his guess on one thing. Sister Katie had not retired as he thought and rather than call again she came down the steps hurriedly and almost got to the front door before Father rapping outside heard her. Dashing for the side porch at full speed he turned the corner for the bed room glancing back over his shoulder as he ran. Instead of seeing Sister Katie his white shirt-tail flew into view and nearly frightened him to pieces. He rushed into the bed room out of breath, saying as he did so, "Oh, my law, Mamie, that thing nearly scared me to death!" "What was it, Tommie?" Mother asked. "Oh nothing, don't ask me anything about it". "But you are scared, what was it?" He had been cornered and had to tell the joke on himself much to the amusement of Sister Katie and Mother.

## CHAPTER V

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### BURPEE AND THE RABBIT

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**W**HEN BURPEE first came to our house, he was not much more than a live lump of soft fur as fluffy as a young duck. He had the cutest eyes you ever saw in a dog, and when he looked up into your own eyes they fairly danced with laughter. Before long we were romping with him and teaching him many tricks. He soon became a big dog and a member of the family as well. If it was cold and rainy, he had a place by the fire.

Once Burpee and I were sent to catch a chicken for dinner. We were giving chase at a desperate rate when the chicken made a sudden turn. Burpee tried to put on brakes and slid six feet before he could start again, this time dashing straight between my legs and throwing me for the hardest fall I ever had until, years later, the record was broken on the football field.

Although a shepherd dog Burpee soon learned to run rabbits. Once I took him out for a hunt when all the other boys were away, or busy at something else. We went down the Nixville Road until we got to the woods beyond Big Ditch where we set in. We didn't have much luck for the season was well spent and rabbits were getting scarce in the neighborhood of our house. We had been hunting an hour and had up to this time worked our way around the back woods, when suddenly a short, sharp yelp told me that Burpee was striking a hot trail. Every once in awhile I could catch a glimpse of his long tail in the

high grass or at times see him as he bounded into the air, looking from side to side for the rabbit. In a few minutes up jumped cottontail and away he went for the cypress pond nearby. Burpee followed at full speed and pushed him so close that bunny dashed into the hollow trunk of a small cypress tree. Frequently when a rabbit went into a hollow tree we would twist him out. This is done by cutting a long green stick with a forked end. The stick is put into



the hole with the forked end first, pushed up higher and higher until you can feel the rabbit, then you begin to twist until you get a firm hold on his hide and slowly pull him down. This I tried without success. The tree was hollow for many feet up and although several times I touched him with the forked end each time when I did so he would climb a little higher and out of reach. Another stick a little longer proved no better and from the looks of the tree, the rabbit might go many feet higher yet.

Something else must be done—smoking him out would not do, so cutting the tree was the only hope. To do this, I would have to leave and go to the house for an axe. I was afraid to do so, for fear the rabbit would leave at the same time and be gone when I returned. I decided, however, to let Burpee watch the tree and in order to make him know that I expected to return, took off my coat, hung it on the end of the gun, and leaned the gun up on a tree nearby. I slowly moved off, speaking to Burpee all the time and telling him to stay there. Across the field I went for the axe, not losing any more time than I could help, and on my return I could see old Burp' some distance ahead of me in the woods, sitting on guard, intently watching the hole. In a few minutes the tree was down, a hole cut up high, where the end of the stick could not reach. With great delight to Burpee and myself as well we soon had our game safely in hand, and with axe, gun and rabbit made our way back to the house. It was the end of a perfect day, and old Burpee seemed to know that his part was well played for he smiled and pounded the floor with his tail as he looked up into my eyes from his warm place in front of the fire.

## CHAPTER VI

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### THE LAGERHEAD AND THE SNAKE

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**T**HE Lagerhead must belong to the hawk family. It has a square head and a hawk eye. It isn't very large but every inch a fighter. Frequently we have watched one drive off crows and very large birds that came near. I have seen them actually light on the back of a hawk or crow while flying and peck away, every once in awhile throwing a feather from the back of the enemy. I don't think a crow ever flies faster than when tackled by a Lagerhead.

Father noticed one of these birds acting very strangely one day; it had found some enemy on the ground and was battling with it. Instead of fighting on the ground, however, it stayed in the air and at short intervals would swoop down, strike and fly up again. Father watched it for some minutes then saw it light and peck away at something. Walking up he found to his surprise that the little bird had killed a snake. No doubt it was protecting its nest, and knowing that snakes are the worst enemies of the little birds, it fought until it had killed the snake.

## CHAPTER VII

### A SUNDAY MORNING POSSUM HUNT

**E**ARLY one Sunday morning we heard dogs barking in the woods nearby. "Listen", I said, "wonder what those dogs are after." Raz answered, "Possums, you know; those are Balaam James' dogs."

It would never do to let anyone know what we were up to but we decided to go and see. We were soon dressed, and tiptoed down stairs, past Mother's room door, out the front way, down the steps and through the gate, before we dared to talk, even above a whisper. Father was a nervous dyspeptic, always cautioning us not to slam the doors. We were certainly obedient boys on this occasion. Out across the big lawn we hurried, over the high rail fence and down the cotton field where in the early dawn we could barely see the outline of the eight inch plank across Big Ditch. Here we crossed another field before reaching the woods. We could hear the dogs clearly now, doubling up their bark—"W-o-o, woo-woo". That meant they had treed. Soon we were making our way through the underbrush, until we came to the place where four dogs were scattered around a little oak bush, all wagging





their tails, looking up and barking—"Wo-o-o, woo-woo". When they saw us some of them shied off but old Bill stayed with us, and as we came up closer, sure enough, curled up in the top of a bush was a fine fat 'possum, three-fourths grown, but just out of reach.

What must we do? This was Sunday, but we were not 'possum hunting. We had only come to see what the dogs were after, and now since we were here, what harm could there be in pulling down the bush, and taking the 'possum home? We didn't even have to climb, so, *surely*, there was no harm in it. Down came the sapling, and soon we had that 'possum ready to go. By some chance before leaving, we looked up, and *what do you think!!* We saw *another 'possum* in another tree, just a little bigger and this time a little higher up. What now? Well, if it was all right to take one possum home, what was the harm in taking one apiece, and since we didn't have to climb *very* high, why not do it? Soon we were up the tree with a hand fastened on that 'possum's tail. We pulled until he let go his hold, and came sliding down together, hitting the ground with a thump! Never were two boys happier, nor yet never two boys more doubtful of the outcome. We felt pretty sure of Father, but what would Mother say!!

In a few minutes we were going over the path we had just travelled, back to the lawn and into the flower garden, where we shut the gate with a vim. Up the big front steps we tramped, into the hall we bolted, slamming the door so as to announce our arrival to everyone in the house. Father and Mother were awake, and we walked into their room, each boy with

a 'possum in his hand, and you should have heard what followed!! "Oh, my dear boys! *Orry! Bury!* what have you been doing? Have you forgotten that this is *Sunday*? Oh my *boys*, my *boys!*" Only one thing saved us; Father was a true sport, loved the fields and the woods, and often took us hunting with him. He listened while we told Mother how we had been led into this grievous temptation, step by step trying to justify ourselves at every stage. Father could stand it no longer. Sitting up in bed, and taking a good look at our game, he said, "Great peace, boys, where did you get those fine 'possums?" This encouraged us, and, leaving Mother's side, we hastened toward him, each holding his 'possum high, saying as we did so, "And Pa, we believe there is another one down there!! Those dogs are still barking!!" but this was too much for Mother; she interrupted with, "Well-let-them-bark— 'possum or no 'possum, you have had all the hunting you are going to do for one Sunday!"

As we walked out of the door, Father cautioned us to secure them well in a good box, "For," he said, "it would never do to let those fine 'possums get away!!"

## CHAPTER VIII

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### BURPEE AND THE FOX

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ONE SUMMER night just after we had gone to bed, Warner, who was sitting up in the big window, called to us in a whisper—"Sh-e-e—be quiet, come here, boys, be easy." Out of the bed we slipped, still as mice, creeping slowly to the window, while Warner sat with the full moon beaming on him. It was the good old summer time, and at his age, on occasions like this, his "fancies lightly turned to thoughts of love." The setting was all that could be desired. As we looked out, we could see the full moon and stars in all of their beauty. The night was still, save for the chirping of the crickets, and the "S-l-e-e-p Sam, s-l-e-e-p Sam" of the Katy-dids. Through the woods, not far distant came the droll hoot of a big owl, while here and there darting across the night went the birds which fly while we sleep. The wise old rooster in the fowl-house near, uttered a quizzical note. Something unusual was happening. What did it all mean? Without saying a word Warner pointed to the ground. "Was it Burpee? No, his tail was too long. Look, it drags on the ground behind him. His legs are too short too. What is it?" "A fox", whispered Warner. "Be quiet." Never before had we seen a fox, in all of its native shyness. Out in the night, slowly creeping through the yard came this thief. He would take a few steps, look, and listen. This was a dangerous crossing, and he was too wise to go fast. Slowly he moved, and on he came, until he reached the little trough where the chickens

were watered. Here he paused again, looked around, listened, then lightly sprang up on the end of the trough. "Would he drink from the chicken trough? Be quiet, watch him." Soon he leaned over, and began as a dog to lap the water. We could hear it plainly, and so could Burpee who spent his nights on the back porch just under us. A low growl from him told us that he too was watching. "*Catch him, Burpee!*" cried Warner, and at the same instant out he dashed, and after the fox he flew. It was a close race to the gate, under which the fox had come. He *just did make it*, Burpee reaching the spot a second too late. He did his best, but the fox was gone, and before the old dog could climb over, he gained a good lead on him. Over the fence Burp went, and down the cotton field he dashed, yelping at the top of his voice; he did his best, but a shepherd dog can't catch a fox. It will take old Bob to do that.





The Banister Rail Was A Dangerous Curve, But We Rode It





## CHAPTER IX

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### A SOW'S NEST

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**Y**OU DIDN'T know that out in the country where hogs go wild the little baby pigs may be found in a nest, did you? Well, when I was a boy we were hunting the sheep one afternoon late way out back of Scrugg Field. It was right over near where father shot the wild turkey when we were riding on Snaps that afternoon. Hurricane Branch runs at the back of Scrugg Field and there were several patches of broomstraw on the branch. I was riding old Dunn and Maner was on Kit. We saw a little path that looked like a sheep path leading into the broomstraw and decided to follow it. Down near the center of the field the bushes were growing as high as the mules' backs. Suddenly Kit stopped and snorted and we saw running in every direction and hiding in the grass numbers of tiny little pigs. A few feet ahead there was a sow's nest or bed of straw.

In preparing the bed she had cut with her teeth the straw for yards around. This she had piled high and made for herself and babies a comfortable and warm bed. Several of the little pigs rushed into the bed and buried themselves in it so that we could not see them at all. We were just getting ready to get down from the mules and make a close inspection when we heard the old mother sow come tearing through the bushes. We did not have to use our heads for the mules used theirs first, wheeling around so fast that it almost threw us to the ground. She

did not follow us but we could hear her calling the pigs together, and judging from their answers they were glad to see their mama.



## CHAPTER X

### GOING AFTER THE WAFFLES

**I**N THE good old days when I was a boy folks thought it was dangerous to have the kitchen too near the house. Neither was it in good taste to have the kitchen so arranged that the fragrant odors all through the house would announce in advance the



coming meal. Our kitchen was nearly half a block away down in one corner of the back yard beyond the

meat-house. It was a double room affair. Maum Maria lived in one room and cooked in the other. She was a good old soul and worked for the family for years. There was a brick walk leading from the back steps out to the kitchen. When a meal was ready Father started us boys at the job. We saw to it that no one shirked his part and it took two or three trips around to bring in a meal. In the winter time we always had waffles for breakfast. Father believed in milk and butter and with a good supply of fresh syrup made from blue-cane, we kept Maum Maria busy cooking and a boy busy running from the kitchen to the house throughout the meal. In rainy weather we took an umbrella and I can hear Father now calling to the boy about ready to leave the dining room for a trip, "Hurry up, Son, don't let the waffles get cold before you get back and do hold the umbrella up and not let them get wet."

The waffles were cooked in an open fireplace on an old waffle-iron that turned out three squares. The iron handles must have been three feet long, but the waffles that came from that fire-place were not to be compared with the present day product.

One cold morning the messenger stayed longer than usual. Father became impatient and sent another to hurry him along. On reaching the kitchen we found that the first boy had stumped his toe just as he left the kitchen door and falling spilled the waffles, but as good fortune would have it he saved the plate and a scolding as well.

## CHAPTER XI

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### THE FROG AND THE RED BIRD

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**V**ERY FEW boys reared on the farm as we were realize early in life the seriousness of taking the life of birds and other little folk of the fields and woods, even going so far at times as to torture small creatures and insects by mutilating their bodies.

I remember once when I was most expert with a sling-shot, walking down to the cross-roads after a big rain with sling in hand and pocket full of rocks. Down in the lower part of the State the only rocks to be found are small pebbles that may be picked up near the creeks, or where some outcropping of clay may chance to appear. These pebbles furnished ammunition for our sling-shots. The ditches were full of water after the heavy rains, and just as I stepped on the bridge I noticed a toad-frog with all four legs stretched out lying on top of the water rejoicing in the flood of sunshine and rain and fairly basking in both. *Just to see if I could hit it* I took dead aim between its eyes and let go. A dull thud and a little blood told the tale. In an instant the scene had changed. I was a good shot and had taken the life which a moment before was so joyous. The more I thought of it the sadder I was and never again did I do such a thing.

A few steps away Maner had a similar experience with a red bird. Sometimes we would shoot a bird that we did not eat but never with father's approval. How thoughtless it was in us!

On this afternoon as we were going down the road

a beautiful and brilliant bird lit on a tree just over us. Maner said, "Let's see if I can kill that red bird", drew the gun and fired. The wonderful little creature with its pretty chirp and haughty topknot which just a moment before had been bubbling over with life now lay dead at his feet. One loné shot through its head had done the work, and as it lay still before him on the white sand, we noticed a blood stain. We both stood and looked and reflected on the sudden change. Tears came in Maner's eyes as he picked the little body up and said, "I'll never do it again."

Life is sweet to all of God's creatures, and although it is proper and right that man should be fed upon meat as well as bread, we should never thoughtlessly, or without justification, take for amusement life that we can never give back.





## CHAPTER XII

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### TIMOTHY-TUG-MUTTON

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**T**IMOTHY-TUG-MUTTON was the name, or nickname, of a mulatto Negro of the old Free Issue race that lived near our home in Hampton County. It may not be generally known, but in the lower part of South Carolina, there were a few Negroes, whose origin I cannot give, commonly known as Free Issue, or Old Issue Free Negroes, who were never slaves. These people were possibly akin to some Indian tribe, for their hair was straight and black, and they lived a very primitive life. They had their own churches and rarely ever inter-married with their blacker neighbors. Usually they lived in little settlements all their own. Occasionally one would be found very industrious and thrifty, but such cases were rare. Most of them owned their own property, lived to themselves, trading now and then with the white people with whom they bartered corn, peas and cotton for tobacco and coffee. Each had his own patch of rice. This was prepared by first threshing it, then beating it with mortar and pestle hewn out of wood. For a mortar, they would saw from a cypress log a block about three feet long. Standing this on end, they would build a small fire on the top which would be slowly replenished until a deep hole had been burned into the end of the block, thus making a mortar. These may still be found among the Negroes, or poorer white people, along our coastal country.

Timothy-Tug-Mutton was one of our most frequent visitors to the store or commissary and seemed always

to have something to trade. His reputation for honesty was none too good, however, and his nickname came from his love for mutton. Although having no sheep of his own, it was commonly admitted that Timothy not only had mutton for himself, but occasionally some to trade. In the old barn, built of hewn timber by Grandfather, there was an auger hole in the floor. The story goes that Grandfather had several barrels of cowpeas stored in the barn, and Timothy, knowing the location of the barrels, worked quite a trick on the old planter. Arming himself with a crocus bag, an auger, and a big stopper he went at night under the barn, bored a hole through the floor into the barrel, and supplied himself with peas from Grandfather's stock. He did not empty the barrel the first night, but would draw out as much as he thought he might take without being noticed and from time to time repeated his trick until finally discovered and caught.

In those days birds were plentiful, trapping was allowed and practiced a great deal. In spite of Timothy's reputation, he was always welcome at our house, especially in the winter, for one of his chief articles of trade was live birds that he had trapped. What prettier sight can you find than a covey of birds in hand! Frequently Timothy would come by with some eight or ten quail, legs tied, all sitting up on his big fist, with their white and brown heads buried back among their feathers. No doubt their little hearts were thumping fast, but they never showed it in their looks. Soon the price would be agreed upon, usually three for a quarter, never more than ten cents apiece, and this taken in trade.

No more joyous moment ever came to a boy than that experience when for the first time he visits his trap in the morning, and finds it literally full of quail, darting here and there within, while hunting a way of escape, nor ever a more heart-rending experience than to see these quail in one united effort burst forth and leave with nothing behind but you, the shattered trap and your shattered hopes.

These were all experiences common to us, experiences not to be lived over nor to be forgotten while we live.



## CHAPTER XIII

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### MY FIRST DAY IN SCHOOL

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I WAS eight years old a few days before school opened. This was the age that Mother thought best for us to begin. I am forty-eight now and my eighth birthday is the only one that I ever looked forward to with dread or looked back upon with regret. Squire Chapin was teacher. Take a look at him on the opposite page and you may understand something of my feeling, when you remember that I was very timid. The picture shown here was made not far away from the spot where I first sat in his school. The building was some better but was just an old Negro house at the cross roads, the use of which Father gave for the neighborhood school. The days before school seemed to fly and the time came around before I was ready for it. I had a slate, a pencil, and a little primer all my own and although the morning dawned bright and fair there were clouds hanging all around me. The other children seemed happy but I solemnly brought up the rear on our march down the big road to the school house, a short distance away. The benches were made of heavy plank with four round pegs or poles for legs and I chose the end of one very close to the back door. Here I sat awaiting the call of the Squire. No prisoner ever awaited his sentence with more dread.

He called the school to order, opened the Bible, and proceeded to read, following which he offered a solemn prayer. Then one by one the larger boys and girls went to the front where lessons were assigned.



There were about twenty pupils and no two had the same book. Parents in those days saw no reason why the books they used as children were not good enough for the younger generation. If scholars ever used the same book, it was literally the *same book*, and two or three would gather together around it studying aloud. When everybody got busy, it's a wonder the teacher heard his own ears. Down the line he came, and I knew that my turn was not far off. He had already scolded severely one of the larger boys, when suddenly a little fellow, not much bigger than I, gave him some provocation for another outburst. Looking over the rim of those spectacles, with fire in his eyes, he stormed away at this boy in such a tone of voice that the last vestige of endurance left me. As he turned his head in another direction I tiptoed out of the door and rather than go around the road made a bee-line across the field for home. Safely out of his reach I began to cry, then to scream and finally to yell at the top of my voice. Mother and sister Katie came running to the front door, saw me and heard me as well, coming across the field for dear life. I threw myself into Mother's arms, half convulsed and terrified beyond description. It was a serious and solemn occasion, and Mother knowing my frailty decided to let Brother teach me for awhile until I got over the nervous attack.

When I think back of my condition and take a look at the Squire's picture, even yet I can't quite reproach myself for this outburst, and if I recall that terrifying voice it's hard to censure myself at all.



## CHAPTER XIV

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### A TIME WITH A MAD DOG

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ONCE FATHER had an attack of economy and traded someone out of a two wheel cart which he assigned to us for school purposes. It was five miles to the nearest school and on the way we always picked up Frank and Maggie, two cousins, a mile down the road. Just before we got to their house one day we came up with a mad dog in the road. There was no question about its condition—it was mad alright, slobbering at the mouth, tongue hanging down, head low and its tail between its legs with that little jog-trot too well recognized by some of us to ever doubt its meaning. It was a mangy, half starved cur and from time to time as we followed we noticed that it would fall. Frank and Maggie were coming across the field headed straight for the dog when we stopped them. We pointed out the danger and they both went back, and in a few minutes Frank returned bringing with him an old horse-pistol that his Father had brought through the civil war. To all appearances it had not been shot since the close of the war, either. It was rusty and the percussion cap was tarnished but it was our only weapon and with it we marched on the enemy. Taking good aim we cocked the hammer and pulled on the trigger; the cap popped but the pistol failed to shoot. The dog was moving off slowly when we put another cap on which never even popped. Now the dog was heading towards us, and realizing that the situation was dangerous, we secured sticks and watching our chance

when the dog fell again we pounced down on it and soon dispatched it. It was a nerve-racking experience, though, and when that pistol refused to fire there was a near-panic.



## CHAPTER XV

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### MY FIRST TRIP TO TOWN

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**W**HEN I was ten years old, I was offered my preference of staying home and attending cousin Helen's wedding, a big event throughout the neighborhood, or going with Father to Savannah. I chose the latter. It was a memorable trip. The cotton crop had been gathered and on this boat we would take the last few bales of fleecy lint.

The crisp November morning made our blood tingle and feet ache as we drove the horse along that fifteen mile ride to the river. Mother fixed us a nice lunch which we enjoyed early in the day. Old Daddy Flander went with us to bring the buggy back. This did not crowd us because I was very small for my age and almost an invalid until I was twelve years old.

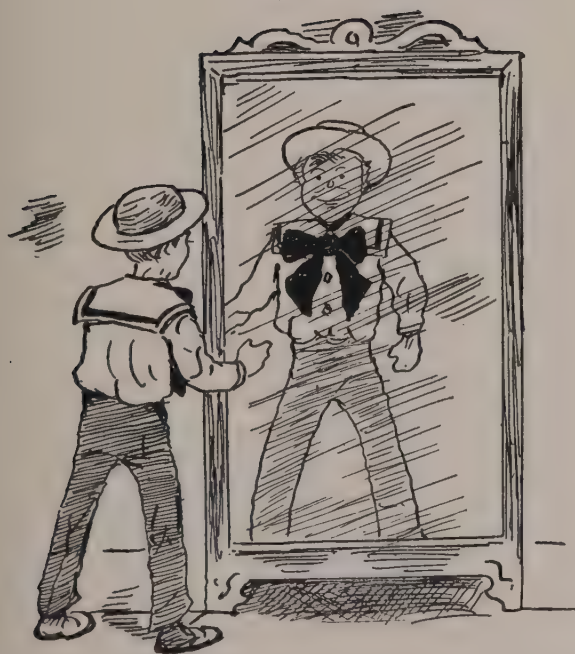
To describe my feelings when the steamboat whistle blew, up the river, would be hard to do. Coming from its deep bass throat it brought mingled feelings of joy and terror. In the distance looking up the river I could see smoke and thus follow the course of the river as the boat wound its way down the crooked channel. Soon around the point it came. What a sight! It plowed up to the landing and as it came near a rope was thrown to shore. This was hurriedly tied to the trunk of a tree after which another rope was thrown from the stern drawn tightly and tied hard by the dock. Then the deck hands began unloading boxes of drygoods and merchandise from Augusta. It was all a wonderful sight to me—an endless number of men at work, the Negroes singing as

they came and went from shore to boat and back again. This freight unloaded, the crew began to haul on board cotton, turpentine and rosin, which was being shipped to Savannah. This took several hours, and it was near night when she untied, started her engines again, and headed down stream.

The pilot on these little steamers always kept a rifle, for frequently a deer in crossing the river, or a turkey gobbler flying from the Georgia to Carolina shore or vice versa, was shot. On such occasions the little boat slowed down, and the game was taken on board. In the summer, however, the rifle was used in shooting alligators. These creatures never move unless hit, and very seldom is one hit in a vital spot.

Soon it was supper time, and my, what good things we had to eat! The captain was on the best of terms with the keepers of the landings. Father knew them all well, and so no doubt we fared better than some others, but the good fare was due largely to the fact that game was plentiful and the landing keepers always had enough, and to spare. After supper I found myself nodding, and Father led me to the little stateroom, where I was soon lost to all around until the next morning.

When I awoke, we were tied up at the dock in Savannah. The deck hands were busy unloading. Breakfast was ready and served to us before leaving the boat. Soon we were in a hack, and being driven to the Scriven House, Father's favorite stopping place. We were assigned a room, and after a friendly chat with the clerk and proprietor started down the street. What sights greeted my eyes, what throngs of people, what wonderful streets and sidewalks, with



store after store all joined together down one long lane!! There were brick stores many colored, one-story stores, and two-story stores, and some with more stories still, all joined together. Some places there were numbers of stores together, all of which looked alike to me. Into one of these Father stepped for a hair cut. It was the first store of this kind I had ever seen, and I watched with wide-eyed wonder, and listened with both ears open to everything that happened in that shop. But the street was alive outside, and I soon found myself at the door, watching the things and folks go by. Across the street in front of a cigar store stood a great big Indian, a life size statue painted red, with feathers down his back, all just like I had heard about. I watched my chance, and soon crossed to take a close view of him. After looking the Indian over, I started back, but for the life of me could not locate the barber shop that Father was in. After many vain attempts, I started back the way we came, I cried all the way back to the hotel. Several good souls stopped me and asked what was the trouble. I didn't linger long to explain, and went on my way anything but rejoicing. At the hotel the good clerk took me under his wing, and well it was that he did so. There was a drummer there, a traveling-man we call them nowadays, whose chief delight was, apparently teasing little lost country boys. This the good clerk resented and from somewhere drew a great big pistol, into which he put match heads one after another, popping them at the drummer when he came too close. Finally Father came, and there was another scene of the Prodigal Son enacted. After



that I stayed close in shore. No doubt Father was glad when the time came to start home.

On the boat next day we had another near-separation. After we had gotten on board Father saw a man in the crowd on shore that he wished to speak to. Telling me to stay there until he came back, he made a hurried flight down the stairway and in a few minutes was lost from my sight in the crowd. The whistle blew another one of those terrifying signals, which I knew meant—"all aboard!" What if it should pull out and leave Father there with me here on deck!! This time I cried with all my might and main. Whether he heard me or not I do not know but soon he appeared on board and I was as happy over the reunion as I had been the day before.

Early next morning, feeling in the pink of perfection I got up before Father did. Walking out into the cabin I saw coming from the other end of the long narrow hall a little boy just about my size. He was coming my way and being alone I thought I would meet him. Getting a little closer I said, "Good morning", but he did not answer. "I wonder if he heard me." He had on a little new hat just like mine but I wasn't stuck up—why should he be? It *was* the prettiest little hat I ever saw though. I went closer and said, "Good morning" again this time louder after which I realized the little boy coming my way was *not a boy at all*. Imagine my surprise when I discovered after walking almost into it, that the door in the end of the room was not a door at all but a great big mirror. I had been talking to myself!

## CHAPTER XVI

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### A RACE WITH A LIZARD

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ONE HOT summer day we were hunting snakes out in the woods on the other side of Big Ditch. Each of us had a stick-horse which made travelling lighter, for we galloped down the cotton rows with much less effort than we might have done had we been going on foot over the same ground on some errand for Father.

We had killed a good sized moccasin in Big Ditch just where the foot-board crossed it. We had a time with it too. Maner ran around in front and got in the ditch with his stick ready to hit it when the snake passed by. I got down under the board and was getting ready to drive the snake towards Maner, when one of the boys standing on the ditch bank just over it disturbed some loose earth which fell right at the moccasin's head. With a quick turn the snake came toward me, and before I could get ready for it, it had glided between my legs. In an instant I was after it and with one lucky lick killed it. Going on into the woods we started up a black snake which in turn routed a lizard. This lizard, a live-wire, striped "race-horse" we called it, gave me the scare of my life. It literally flew up my leg into my trousers. I yelled and grabbed it for dear life. I was afraid to let it go, holding the lizard as I thought in a roll of trousers and lizard together. Making for home I rushed upstairs to our bed room where I proceeded to undress. To my amazement the lizard couldn't be found! Whether or not it actually ran up my

trousers I cannot say ! it certainly ran up my leg, and I can almost feel it now with its little cold feet tickling me all the way. The others laughed at me much about this and it was a joke for years to come.



## CHAPTER XVII

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### CUTTING A BEE TREE

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CUTTING a bee tree is lots of fun especially when there are lots of bees, lots of honey and lots of folks to do the cutting. I remember once when the men were cutting logs for the saw mill near home we found in the top of a big pine a wonderful supply of honey laid up for the winter. The bees had evidently been there for several winters for the supply of honey was unusually great. The men all carried away buckets and pans-full, and in one side of the hollow top split off so as to form a perfect trough, there was honey for weeks after.

Out in one of the fields near home there was a solitary pine, dead and a real giant, but hollow at the top. So high did this tree stand that it was all we could do to make out the tiny bees coming and going from one of the limbs. We watched it for many months and because of its size hesitated to cut it. Finally Father gave us some help and we gathered a crowd around us one night and started out, loaded with empty pails and pans. It must have taken two hours to fell the tree. Finally we heard a "crack", then another, after which with a few more blows the great tree came hurling through the air. Going up cautiously we finally reached the top which was broken into a thousand pieces. Scattered about among the dead limbs we found numbers of wounded and worried *wasps*! After a hard night's work and nothing to show for it we left as we had come—with empty pails, and a big joke on the whole bunch. There's never

any telling what you will find in a hollow tree though, and we never minded the work that it took in order to find out. Every time we saw a hole in a tree we saw a question mark around it, and sooner or later we found the answer.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### BUNKER AND JOCKEY

**W**HEN we were boys down on the farm never a calf was allowed to grow any size before he was broken in as a saddle-horse. Breaking a young bull was always attended with unbounded joy and the worse he was, the better we liked it. Sometimes we met our match. I remember when Joe had three of us to hold Bunker while he got astride, stuck his toes under his fore legs and said, "Let him go", and don't you forget it, he went. I have never seen a calf do the stunts that Bunker did in so short a time.



Across the cotton field he flew now his head up and then his tail! He bellowed as if he was being murdered. The rest of us followed yelling at the top of our

voices, "Hold him, Joe, hold him." Joe was a good rider and after a desperate tussle quieted the young fellow down, from which time on we had very little trouble with him.

The favorite ox in the family was old Jockey, a white and black spotted calf that grew to be quite useful and quite a favorite at home. We made such a good job of it on Jockey that Father decided to keep him for an ox. We always used mules and horses, although there were oxen all around us.

One year when Father decided to be very economical he made us drive Jockey to school five miles away, so that the horse might plow. That meant an early start and a late home-coming. Many were the experiences we had on the road going to and coming from school. There were two ways of making him trot. Sometimes we used one, sometimes the other, while again if we were late, both plans were used at the same time. One of these methods was opening and shutting an umbrella which frightened him fearfully. One of the boys would hold the reins while another would stand near the front of the wagon and lean forward as far as he could, and suddenly open the umbrella in such a way as to make Jockey think that some dreadful creature was bursting out after him. He would jump and race for a few steps quieting down to his slow walk in a short time. The experiment would be repeated always with the same result. The other stand-by method was the old reliable process of twisting his tail. This never failed!

One day at school someone in our crowd had a near fight with one of the other boys. It always took us a few minutes to hitch up the ox after school was out



and this gave the other children a chance to get ahead of us down the road. On this day as we passed the crowd someone threw a hard cotton boll hitting Sister in the face. We were very much incensed and were quite sure we knew who did it. The following day it was repeated, this time several joining in the fusillade. It was only by using both means at once that we succeeded in making Jockey beat a hasty retreat. When we got home we went to the cotton field and gathered a peck or more of cotton bolls which we hid in the



wagon under the boxes and other seats, keeping very quiet about the whole affair. School was closed, the crowd going ahead of us as usual and we could see them gathering cotton bolls as they went down the road. By this time we had added two or three friends to our number and had quite a load of passengers each with his pockets and hands full of cotton bolls ready to make war. Without appearing to be ready for the attack we drove on out as usual and down the

road. This time we didn't hurry Jockey but let him take his time. Soon we were in the midst of the crowd and soon the battle opened. Being taken by surprise and not having more than a few bolls each, our enemies were completely routed, many of our well directed blows going straight home to their faces and heads. After this we were prepared but never again called upon to defend ourselves.

Jockey lived to be an old, old ox and was finally given to some good Negro in the neighborhood, whom he served faithfully until he died several years later.



## CHAPTER XIX

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### A COUNTRY BEEF MARKET

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THE ONLY time we saw ice in the summer was on the fourth of July. It had to be hauled in a wagon for at least twelve miles over hot sandy roads and was an expensive luxury, not much of it being left after such a trip. There was no way to keep meat fresh very long. The only cool place was down in the well and what meat we kept over night was frequently lowered by rope near the water's edge.

In order to have fresh beef during the summer the farmers worked out a plan that proved very helpful. Eight farmers formed what we called a market. A book was prepared showing the name of each man and the date on which each would kill a beef and to whom the different parts would be sent. The book was so made up that with one farmer butchering each week, by the end of eight weeks each had received an entire beef. There were shoulders, briskets, loins and legs—two of each. The farmers visited each other before making up a market and agreed on the size beef that would be used. If one of the number ever fudged on the crowd he was dropped next year and not allowed to come in. The meat must be properly butchered and delivered in clean sheets, not allowing the sand to sift into it.

Some men would hang beeves up when dressing them. This was done by hanging two trace chains three feet apart over a scaffold or cross-bar. The lower ends of the chains were fastened to a heavy

gambrelling stick, usually a piece of timber six inches square, the ends of which were rounded off like the axle of a wagon. On these ends each hind leg was hung. The gambrelling stick had two heavy spikes driven in about three feet apart which were used as hooks. To each were attached the lower ends of the chain. Two big auger holes at right angles were bored through the gambrelling stick. After gambrelling the beef and hooking the chains the stick was turned by means of hand sticks rounded off at the end and alternately inserted into the holes, thus winding the chain around the windlass or stick. In this way the beef was gradually lifted until it hung clear.

The usual method of dispatching the animal was by shooting it with buck-shot. Father was good at it and taught me when I was very young to kill a beef. The Negroes seemed to take much pride in my ability to bring down these big animals, but after my experience with the alligator shooting a beef was a small job.

Taking our part out we loaded the rest of the meat, carefully packing it into a one-horse wagon and then drove for miles around delivering to each man his portion. Mother always took care to store away tallow for chapped hands during the winter and enough to make tallow plasters for our colds. If this failed "stewed witch" was given us. This was a concoction made as far as I can recall of melted tallow, vinegar, soda, syrup and possibly some other ingredients stewed together and given to us hot. That never failed, but what a dose!

The hide was nailed up against the side of the barn to dry and later used for hame strings for the mules

and shoe strings for the Negroes. After butchering, the fifth quarter was turned over to the men who helped with the work. Didn't you know that a beef has five quarters in it? Ask your butcher what that means.



## CHAPTER XX

### THE BEE BIRD

**A** BIRD not seen very often in the up-country is quite common on the coast. It resembles a mocking-bird somewhat or a catbird in its color and size. I can't tell you what the naturalists would call it, but the name by which it is known in the low-country is Bee Bird. We were not allowed to shoot them and often wondered where they got their name. Father was very careful to see to it that in our hunting we would not kill just for the sake of killing. We must shoot only birds good for food. Bee Birds were not in this class and I am glad now that we were not allowed to shoot them. One of the first things that reminds me of my boyhood days is the sound of this little bird's voice when I get into the belt in which it is common.



Their favorite perch is in the top of an oak or sycamore tree. Here they will sit and sing by the hour never moving except to fly up into the air in pursuit of some insect.

We were talking about Bee Birds one day when Father asked if we knew where it got its name, and

on finding that we did not he sent one of us for the gun, telling us that he didn't want us to shoot the Bee Birds but that he would get one in order to show us something about it. He went out and soon brought down a specimen. Taking it into his hands he called us around him, then pushing back the feathers on the top of its head displayed what looked like a beautiful white flower with red tips on the petals. He explained that when we saw these birds sitting in the high tree-tops that they were there with this little flower spread out to attract the bees and insects. We then understood how this bird fared so sumptuously, and knew why it was called the Bee Bird, for it lived on bees attracted to it by its flower.









The Lawn Where The Little Bird Forgot To Fly

## CHAPTER XXI

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### FORGOT TO FLY

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ONE DAY we were sitting on the porch in the early summer just before the oats were ready to cut when we saw a covey of young birds rise out of the oat field and come straight toward us lighting in the grass on the lawn. They were too young to shoot but old a plenty to have fun with. We watched carefully the spot where they lit and decided on a plan to surround and surprise them. Hurrying out the front gate and down the long walk, Bury turned to the left, Maner to the right and I took the middle. At a given signal we rushed into the covey. All of the birds except one flew up with a roar and went back into the oat field, but one little partridge *forgot to fly*. It became excited and took to its heels with three boys after it. Running for all we were worth we ran it up to the root of a tree; this it began to circle around and around until we caught it.

“That certainly was a fine bird,” Father said as he walked from the dining room the next morning, on his way to the back porch where he always washed his fingers after a meal.

## CHAPTER XXII

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### TRIP

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**T**RIP was a little dog with no pedigree. A good guess would be that his near relatives were fice and shepherd, for he favored both. He came to live with us when our big shepherd Burpee was in his glory, and frequently followed us in our rounds about the place. The farm on which we were boys contained nearly a thousand acres of land, only about one-third of which was in cultivation. Our tramps for the most part were in the woods.

One Saturday afternoon the latter part of March we started with Burpee and Trip, going out the Nixville Road to one of our favorite hunting grounds. Strolling through the woods we soon got up a rabbit. Burpee and Trip were hot on his heels in an instant, and left us far behind, going in the direction of Big Pond. After running some distance we met Burpee coming back, so knew that the chase was off and the rabbit gone. For some reason Trip did not show up the rest of the afternoon and we supposed that he had taken a short cut home. It was time to bring up the cows and we pulled in tired and worn. The next day we missed Trip again and wondered why he was not there for breakfast. Another day or two passed and no signs of the dog and we began to feel uneasy about him. On the fourth day after his disappearance we were out in the same woods with Cousin Bessie and a lot of girls and boys picking violets and other early spring flowers when we heard in the direction of Big Pond the weak, faint bark of a dog. At first we did

not recognize it, but soon, working our way in the direction of the cry, someone said that it sounded like Trip. We all listened intently for a second, then decided to follow the sound of the weak voice. In a short time we reached the place and were baffled for awhile to locate the spot from which the bark came. Suddenly one of the boys cried out, "Look, boys." We all looked and ran at the same moment.

Cypress trees spread out at the ground taper-



ing off in a funnel-like manner, with frequently the lower part of the trunk hollow. These hollow trees are often used by the rabbits and other little folk of the woods as dens or hiding places when pursued. In this particular tree there were two holes in the hollow trunk—on one side a large hole and on the other a small one about four inches in diameter. Evidently the rabbit had run into the larger hole through which

Trip followed, and out of the smaller where the little dog tried to go. His head was all that could go through the hole and so tight was the fit that he could not pull it out again, nor could he get his body through. For four days and nights Trip had stayed in guillotine crying at the top of his voice until his poor little voice was almost gone. The grass and weeds around had been bitten in his attempt to free himself or probably eaten for food in his desperation. Wherever he could reach it the bark of the tree was gnawed too and his neck was rubbed raw by his efforts to get free. It required an axe to cut him out and when we did he was so weak we had to carry him home in our arms. There was joy unbounded at his recovery and chief among the joy makers was Trip himself. He seemed to appreciate with human gratitude all that we had done for him and for the remainder of his life stayed close home, never again taking any stock in rabbit hunting. When he died we gave him a decent burial in the lawn and put this marker over his grave:

TRIP  
FAITHFUL  
UNTO DEATH

## CHAPTER XXIII

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### MY FIRST DEER HUNT

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UNCLE SOULE lived about fifteen miles from home and very near the Savannah River. The hunting in the river swamp is famous even now—forty years after this story occurred.

In the early spring I have heard just at daybreak wild turkeys gobble from the tree tops there. Trees are alive with squirrels, wild ducks are plentiful on the small lakes and creeks that enter the river and an occasional bear is found. Wild hogs, raccoons, 'possums and all the other kindred varmints may be found there in abundance. Lakes and streams furnish splendid fishing, and so a trip to Uncle Soule's was looked forward to with unbounded joy.

I was only nine years old when Father took me for my first deer hunt. We went down the evening before and Uncle Soule arranged for the hunt for the following day. Far into the night he and Father talked, many times their conversation bursting into peals of laughter, for no one enjoyed more than these two brothers a visit together. Pranks they had played on each other and on others when boys were told over again. The fire burned low, the coals crackled in the fireplace and after yawning a time or two, Father suggested that "there is a time for all things" and that this was the time for bed. The dogs which had been called up quieted down and deep stillness fell over the house and the woods around. We were to leave after an early breakfast and my boyish nature could scarcely contain itself. Finally I drop-



ped off to sleep and when I awoke it was time for breakfast. Hurrying into my clothes I was soon ready and oh! what a bountiful table dear Aunt Addie set and all around it were our cousins—boys and girls—full of life and love. It was a home where we loved to go, but travelling was slow in those days and we seldom saw each other. After breakfast the dogs were given a light feed, horses were saddled and we were soon off for the swamp. The hunters carried horns and many of them were experts in blowing up the dogs. No one who has never heard it can imagine what the sound of horns and the barking of dogs mean to a boy or man who loves the hunt. Here and there along the way others joined us bringing their contribution of hounds until a pack of some twelve or fifteen romped about the legs of the horses and mules as we hurried along the trail which led to that happy hunting ground—the Savannah River swamp. After going for an hour the party divided, the drivers taking the dogs branched off for points in the distance from which the deer would be driven. The rest of us were carried down along the trail and stationed at intervals just out of gun-shot of each other on a “stand” where we were to stay until the drivers sent a deer dashing through the line.

I was a small boy for my age but they had given me a double-barrelled shot gun to stop the first big buck that came my way. We had been on the stand probably an hour when far away to the west we heard a faint bark, then another and another followed by cheers from the drivers as they urged the dogs on. Soon in a wild roar the entire pack broke loose following which we heard a gun-shot and knew the deer



was up. Nearer and nearer they came and clearer and clearer we heard the barking dogs. To say that I was excited doesn't begin to describe my feeling. It was my first experience and the most lasting. In less time than it takes to tell it there was a crash like the falling of a tree in the cane-break just ahead. Then wonder of wonders! headlong toward me with his horns back and his nose held high came the buck! Now I saw it, blazed away—shot again and all was still. To my right two shots rung out from the stand on which we had left Uncle Soule while on the left another gun had spoken. Uncle Soule came rushing up asking why in the world I hadn't killed the deer. "Why, Bubber, it ran right over you and you missed it." About that time I had gotten possession of my wits and mustered up courage enough to ask, "Did you get yours?" "No," he replied, "I was watching the deer that you shot at and didn't see mine. It nearly ran over me, too." The others came up one with a deer taking Uncle Soule and myself to task for poor shooting but giving the worst of the argument to him—much to my delight. It's an exciting moment and one that every boy should experience.

Our low-country is still a happy hunting ground and with good roads and Fords, we ought to give the boys more of it. It beats the movies sixteen to one!

## CHAPTER XXIV

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### FEEDING THE SHEEP

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FATHER kept a flock of sheep, and how interesting it was in the early spring to go out in the field and count from day to day the new lambs, then later to watch them caper. Lambs are the liveliest little folk of all and play together like children. When they are quite young, lambs follow closely on their mother's heels, but in a month or two as they grow may be seen in a group aside from the older sheep playing all kinds of antics. They caper about each other, romping and playing games almost like "drop the handkerchief." No group of children ever had a bigger time than a bunch of lambs, frolicking on the new grass.

Just before Jesus left the earth for His home in Heaven, He turned to one of His disciples and said, "Feed my sheep," and another time, "Feed my lambs." Not once did he say feed my billy-goats. When the ground is covered with snow, goats may be found away up on some rocky cliff feeding on the moss that grows there. Goats can live anywhere on anything, but unless you feed the sheep and the little lambs they will freeze and die in the cold. We didn't have much snow in our part of the State but it was cold enough Father thought for the sheep to come home at night.

I remember one day on counting up the lambs that I missed one. The old mother sheep was in deep distress and bleating constantly. She would run some distance back of the flock, stop and bleat, then for

fear of being left would run back into the crowd. Going in the direction toward which she went on these short runs I heard a faint cry. Following the ditch bank I came to the place where a sheep had crossed. The ditch was well nigh covered over with briars, and there down near the bottom of it was the little lost lamb, tangled and worn with its efforts to free itself. With some difficulty I beat the briars down, then going down step by step straddling the ditch by stamping a foot into the sandy walls I lowered myself until I could reach the lamb. Taking it out and tenderly clasping the little ball of fur to my breast, I carried it to its mother. It was quite weak but after a good warm supper, wiggled its tail and went on with the crowd.

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." He wants us to be on the lookout for his little lost sheep all along life's road. They are not hard to find, and if you listen you can hear them crying right where you are. Let's save them every one; take them in our arms, love them up close to us and carry them back home.

## CHAPTER XXV

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### HOG-KILLING TIME

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OUR PLANTATION was a big one and in addition to a large household there were six or eight families of Negroes living on the place to be fed and clothed. The price of cotton sometimes went as low as four or five cents a pound, and there was not much money to be had. Cotton was the only product of the farm for which we could get cash. To feed and clothe all of these from the income of the farm was a man-sized job, and as I think back I realize what a good business man Father must have been.

The plow-boys were paid eight dollars a month and "rations." The weekly ration given to one of them was three pounds of bacon, a peck of grits and a quart of syrup. The wages received by them were used to buy flour, lard, coffee, sugar and cloth. An account was opened with each, and a good farmer never allowed his help to get too far in debt during the year. When cotton-picking time came each Negro from the oldest to the youngest went into the field and made money enough picking cotton to pay off their accounts in the store.

Father raised forty or fifty hogs a year, sometimes more. He planted peas and peanuts besides sweet potatoes a plenty and here the hogs were allowed to run in the late summer. When winter came on those to be butchered were put into pens about ten rails high. These pens were floored with rough plank, and corn in the ear was fed to the hogs until they were fat and fine. The "street" or Negro "quarters" was some distance from the house, and when during the

night the weather suddenly turned cold, Father would wake us up early before day and send us down to call the men. I can hardly account for the feeling but hog-killing time on the farm carried with it unbounded joy. In a few minutes we would be dressed and through the early morning making our way in the



dark to wake up Ned Taylor, Daddy Flander, William Dublin and the others. Ned was the biggest of them all and it amused us to see him dress. The Negro houses were one or two room affairs—sometimes log cabins—logs sandwiched with cracks almost as large, with a great wide clay chimney in one end. Ned would soon have a fire started, often fanning or blowing it up from the coals of the night before. Placing small rich kindling next to the coals then adding



larger sticks, he would blow and blow. The room would soon be ablaze with light and warmth. We would stand around warming up while Ned got into his shoes. This was the biggest part of the job and instead of socks he would wrap his feet with cloth or rags then carefully insert them into his big shoes, we wondering all the time how he would ever do it and keep the rags in place. In a few minutes all was ready, and with torch in hand leading the procession Ned started for the big house.

The first thing necessary was hot water. A fire was started under the syrup boiler which held a hundred gallons, while some began filling it with pail after pail of water brought from the well. By daylight everything was ready, and with axe in hand Ned would enter the pen, Father usually selecting the hogs to be killed. One blow from the axe and it was all over with piggy for Ned was a powerful man and Father would not allow any more suffering than necessary. To bleed the hogs one must be expert for it was thought that meat would not keep well unless the hogs were well bled. Then over the fence two or more men would throw the porker. Picking it up they would take the pig to the boiler holding it now by the hind legs and sousing it head first into the water, pulling it out again testing it to see if the hair would come off smoothly, then reversing the process they would duck the other end. Quickly the hog was thrown on a platform of boards spread on the ground, when all hands turned to and peeled and scraped off the hair. "Gambrel the hog", someone would call. The two hind legs were split near the hoof, a strong muscle exposed, gambrelling stick inserted and the

hog hung up. One after another went through this process until some ten or fifteen were ready.

Did you ever eat melt roasted on the coals? Ask Daddy what it is, and if he don't know your Grandmother can tell you. That was the part they gave us boys and it was the first fresh meat of the season. Then came pigs-feet boiled and fried with hog-foot jelly for dessert, spare-ribs and back-bones, sausage and crackling bread. After the good old greasy time the lady folks had trying up the lard, there were other parts which if we chose to eat could be had by dining with the Negroes. There was a limit to fresh meat at our house and Mother stopped when she got there.

After the meat had cooled it was cut and salted down into great boxes in the smoke-house. Several weeks later this was taken out, hung up and smoked. Smoking the meat was one of my jobs. The wood to be used must be rotten and if it was not damp, water was thrown on it so as to make a continual smoke without a flame. The bacon and sometimes shoulders were sold to the Negroes, but hams were kept for our own use.

Father was a bountiful provider and I do not remember the time when there was not meat and syrup in the smoke-house, corn in the barn and a well filled pantry. There were chickens, turkeys and geese in the yard, sheep and cattle and hogs on the farm, sweet potatoes in the bank—and the price of cotton didn't affect our appetites or trouble our young minds. "He that provideth not for those of his own household is worse than an infidel." Father was far from it.

## CHAPTER XXVI

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### THE HAWK AND THE SNAKE

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**I**T WAS only a short mile to our next door neighbor's just over the branch and his home was on the road to Lawtonville Church. One morning on our way to Sunday School just as we drove into the swamp we saw a hawk fall wounded to the ground. No one had shot a pistol or gun and we could not account for it. Stopping the horse we climbed the fence and just as we got almost in reach of the hawk it flew up from the ground, while at the same moment a long black snake glided off into the underbrush. It was the old fable repeated in actual life—hawks feed on snakes, and evidently in this case the snake proved too much for it, perhaps choking the hawk, or by tightening its coils around its body brought it to the ground. This is what the snake wanted and on finding itself back on the ground promptly unwound its coils and released the hawk. The big bird no doubt was as delighted as the snake. It was a strange sight and the only time in my life that I ever saw it.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### BATHING IN A BARREL

**T**UB NIGHT in the country was the worst evening of the week; only one thing being comparable to it and that was washing feet on a cold night. We didn't like shoes and Asbury would go



barefooted the winter through. His feet would chap and crack until footwashing was terrible indeed, but

in the good old summer time out by the well we would set a hogshead or big syrup barrel and during the day would fill the barrel with water and at night go out and take a dip. Sometimes two or three of us would get in together, go down under the water together and see who could stay the longest. This worked all right if the barrel was filled early in the day so that the sun could warm the water, but if we waited until afternoon it was a cold plunge indeed.

I wish I knew the name of the woman who came along with the cruel tale that a cold bath in the morning the year round was good for a sickly child. I have been through many kinds of torture of mind and body but none has yet equalled the torture of mind when I contemplated it, nor the torture of body when I experienced that cold bath on a cold morning. Father was trying it out for dyspepsia and so to even up administered the dose to me. He would fill a long tub with fresh water on a cold morning, make me stand or squat in one end of it take a big towel and literally knock the breath out of me, first in front and then in the back. It made a man of me though, for a year ago I laid on the operating table with four doctors and three nurses around me and chatted and joked with the surgeon while he carved away for an hour and a half. It was a picnic compared with the cold douche they gave me every winter morning when I was a boy.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

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### BOB AND THE FOX

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**B**OB was a big pointer, with more sense than any dog I ever saw. Father was a good shot, but cared nothing for hunting anything but quail. Frequently he would have Daddy Flander to saddle Snaps, a little sorrel horse, after which he would get into the saddle, call to one of us boys, and to the fields we went. Bob would prance about and apparently kiss Snaps in his glee, so overjoyed was he at the prospect of a hunt. As we galloped down the road, he would literally fly ahead of us, raising the dust that Father objected to but could never stop. In a minute he was back again, jumping up into the horse's face in a way that seemed dangerous to me, although he always managed to get away before the horse's feet struck him. If he went hunting with us boys, he seemed to know that rabbits were what we wanted. On such occasions he took to the woods and many were the rabbits that he helped us get. He was the fastest runner I ever saw. This came through our training him to run off the strange dogs that came to the house. It mattered not how much lead a dog might have on him, when we put Bob out in a chase he never failed to run that dog down, and invariably would knock him ten feet or more as an introduction. With such a lick to begin with, no dog showed fight, so Bob came to believe that he could catch any dog anywhere.

One day Emile, a cousin, was visiting us, and we decided to go hunting. Hurriedly we made for the



woods. It was early in the fall and still hot weather. We had hunted several hours with no success. When we reached a clump of saplings out in old Trowel Field, we lay down to rest on the cool carpet of pine needles. Bob never rested on a hunt though and we hadn't been there long before we heard him coming,



yelping in his sharp, snappy way that he always barked when running a dog. We sat up and looked, and here he came right toward us, full tilt behind a fox. Raz grabbed the gun but Bob was so close up on the fox that he was afraid to shoot, but finally did make a wild shot. This did not seem to do more than aggravate the situation with the fox, but nothing could stop Bob. In an instant he was on the fox, knocking him over in the same style that he treated dogs, while we dashed up, caught the fox, and brought him home alive.

We have had many a laugh since then about old Bob putting it over that fox that day. He was flying over those woods at a rate never before seen. He evidently thought it was a dog, and knowing that he could catch any dog anywhere, he literally flew. It was a great race, and Bob won it.



## CHAPTER XXIX

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### A FIGHTING SNAKE

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**S**NAKE KILLING was a great pastime with us and snakes were always plentiful. Father was deathly afraid of them but we were not. We seldom ever saw a rattle snake; they were very scarce in those days, but water moccasins were everywhere. The little green snakes we played with and had many laughs at the girls whom we delighted to frighten with them. A green snake is as harmless as a dove, but girls generally don't like them. We had caught many black snakes and although Father told us that there wasn't much harm in a black snake, still he, like the girls, was afraid of them too.

I remember on two occasions where we ran snakes into their holes. In each case the snake went in head-first and left its tail where we could reach it. Slipping up carefully I caught hold of the tail, pulled the snake out and killed it. Then there were chicken or rat snakes. I remember once down at the store at the cross roads hearing a great commotion among the rats in the boxing over the shelves. Climbing up hurriedly I peered down into the dark recess between the rafters, and there *within twelve inches of my face* was a chicken snake coiled around a rat which he was killing. It was a long way to the floor but it did not take me long to reach it.

Never though were we quite so frightened as on one occasion when we ran into a coach-whip. It was the first we had ever seen though we had heard of them often. Coach-whips are black snakes with white bel-



lies, very long and keenly built. We were tramping through the woods and came to one of the ponds where the water had dried up. There in the open lay this long keen black snake, and according to custom we began our march down on the enemy. Suddenly and without warning, with its head raised two feet in the air it started toward us. We backed out surprised at its audacity. In an instant the snake was gliding along at a terrific rate while we had stampeded in every direction. After the danger was over we reconnoitered, held a council of war and decided to return the fire. Going carefully back to the pond and peering into every nook and corner of the ground ahead before venturing a step, we located the snake still half standing and waiting for us. Getting a long pole and keeping a big cypress tree between me and the snake, I carefully slipped down on it, the other boys holding its attention in the meantime by remaining in full view. When within striking distance I peeped around the tree and with one swift blow mortally wounded it. The other boys came trooping down and after killing the snake, we laid it out on a log and literally pounded it to pieces. I have never had any use for a coach-whip since that day and if I should meet one in the road think I would let it go rather than tackle it. At any rate it's a good thing to know that there is a difference between a common black snake and a coach-whip, and a big difference, too.

## CHAPTER XXX

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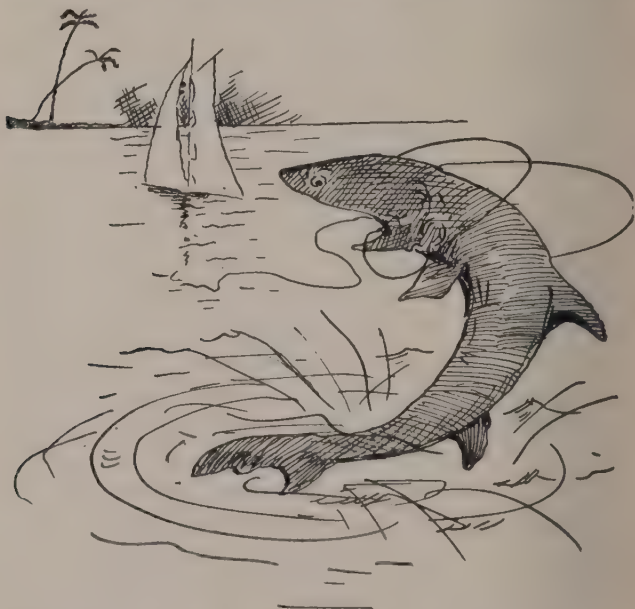
### A SHARK STORY

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**W**HEN CROPS were laid by and work on the farm slowed down, Father took us to the sea coast sixty miles away. Bluffton was a place we all loved and the only way to reach it was by dirt road knee deep in sand. The heavy ruts made traveling almost impossible and in order to save the mules from the heat of the day, we started on these trips in the afternoon. The journey took the entire night but early the following day we could smell the salt air and get a glimpse of the marsh lands of the low-country. Our joy was unbounded. We generally spent a month, and shortly after our arrival were into every prank and fun that the place afforded. One of these was fishing for sharks.

Frequently when out on a whiting-drop we would hook a small shark two or three feet long and there was great commotion in the boat while each hauled in his line to avoid tangling it with the young "tiger of the deep" darting here and there under the boat and back again in its mad effort to free itself from the hook and line. One day we borrowed a shark line at the end of which was a hook as big as your finger. On this hook we fastened a chunk of fish half the size of your head. We were in a sail boat and carried the line in tow while we sailed away around the point near Palmetto Beach. A good breeze was blowing and we were enjoying the ride. On we went with full sail ahead soon forgetting the shark line in our wake. Speeding along the edge of a marsh we were sudden-

ly surprised by a splash in the rear. This was followed by another in quick succession. Looking back we saw a monster shark plunging wildly and trying to free itself from the big hook. Excited beyond measure and with lack of experience, the rudder was



forgotten, the sail flapped in the gale and the boat grounded. We tried to give the shark more line, but by this time it was stretched to a size not much bigger than a common fishing line. Another desperate effort, a big splash and all was still. We hauled in the slack line, and on the end of it found the hook which this man-eater had bent straight with sheer force. It was too late—our opportunity was gone; we had paid

no attention to the line after throwing it out, and as luck would have it had hooked a tremendous fish which required skillful handling and careful attention to land. We soon had the boat under way again, but returned home with heavy hearts at the loss of this big game. The motto of the Boy Scouts, "Be Prepared", had not reached our borders in those days, or perhaps the story would have a better ending.

Of course we showed the hook to Mother and told her the story. She was sorry for our sakes no doubt, but down in her heart there may have been secret rejoicing in the fact that the hook straightened as otherwise the big fish may have towed us out to sea or turned the boat over in its effort to free itself.



## CHAPTER XXXI

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### THE MILL POND

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UNCLE ASBURY lived eight miles from home and we often visited his family. Crawford, one of the boys, was just my age and we were more like brothers than cousins. We frequently went together to the mill pond about a mile away.

It was a large pond full of waterlillies, flags and fish. The first real fish I ever caught was a bream in the mill-race just below the mill. We had been fishing awhile but without any success. The others had stopped but I couldn't leave the sport. Fishing around an old stump near the edge I finally got a bite, my cork shot under and I pulled. I was about six or seven years old and Father saw me tussling with the rod, ran to my rescue and helped me land a fine blue bream—the best fresh-water fish that grows.

Mr. Oglesby looked after the grist mill. The water flowed from the mill over a wide platform known as the sheeting. Fish swimming upstream could often be caught by closing a gate at the lower edge of the sheeting just as the water was shut off.

One Sunday while visiting Crawford we walked down to the mill and looking around noticed a leak near the bottom of the dam. The water was pouring through in a small but threatening stream. We hunted up Mr. Oglesby and brought him down and showed it to him. It was Sunday and he did not think it necessary or best to tackle the job then. We went away with misgivings, and the next morning the dam was gone; it had washed away during the night. The



ox was in the ditch and what a pity no one helped it out. Jesus would have stopped that leak and saved the pond—and so did I many years later when on another Sunday we stopped a leak in another dam and saved a beautiful lake.

We mustn't be so good on Sunday that we let the opportunity to do good pass by.



## CHAPTER XXXII

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### A GOOD SHOT

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FATHER was sick, and being a nervous dyspeptic, had to be very careful about his diet. He was fond of birds, and frequently took his gun and dog and brought back a goodly number. We boys soon became good shots, except in hunting quail; Herb, the youngest, being the only one who ever learned to shoot them. We hunted doves frequently, the fellow with the gun taking his stand behind a dead tree or stump, while the others rode or walked around the fields and drove them up. Sometimes we rode old Dun, a light colored mule, that didn't like a gun a bit. If we ever dismounted in a hurry and Dun got a chance, back to the house she would go, her head high in the air to avoid stepping on the bridle reins which dangled at her feet. We boys were boys though, and many a time took her by surprise and fired away while sitting in the saddle taking our chance at what might follow.

On this occasion the doves were wild, and try as we would we failed to get a shot. It was getting late and the cows must be brought home from the pasture and milked, and the sheep salted. Suddenly we saw coming straight toward us a drove of doves with hundreds in it. Apparently they did not see us. Warner was in the saddle and I sitting behind him on the mule. We sat still, neither Dun nor the doves suspecting anything. On they came until they got within gun shot. Warner raised his gun, at the sight of which

they suddenly attempted to go in reverse. The gun fired and Dun whirled, both of us falling to the ground while the mule made for home. We picked



ourselves up, decided we were still able to walk, and began looking around us.

That lone shot, the only one we got in the whole afternoon's hunt, went straight home,—and so did we a few minutes later, carrying with us five nice fat doves to Father.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

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### BLACK JIM WAS SCARED OF BLOOD

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FATHER was very careful with the beef that was sent out to the members of the "country beef market." On this particular occasion he was especially so. The little one-horse wagon had been swept, fresh straw put in and a nice clean sheet spread on top of the straw. Each piece of beef was carefully marked and packed in the proper order so that it might be easily unloaded from house to house. For some reason he decided to have old Jim hitched to the wagon. Jim was a black mule that always pricked up his ears, snorted and made a big fuss at the smell of blood or fresh beef. All of us knew this and were careful not to go about his head while handling the meat. Everything went along finely until an idea struck Herbert.

Going to the fresh hide he smeared a little blood on his hand and just as the last package was stored away on the wagon and before anyone climbed in he slipped up to Jim's head and held his hand to the mule's nose. With a wild snort and plunge that nearly knocked Herbert down, Jim dashed across the lawn. Out spilled the meat this side and that into the dirt, as the mule swerved from side to side tearing up the wagon against a cedar tree.

On a recent trip to the old place Herbert pointed out the tree and the scar now grown up several feet higher but still there where the wagon tore a great gash in the side of the tree. I don't remember whether or not Father found out what caused the

trouble but if so no doubt Herbert got what was coming to him for playing that trick. The smell of blood did the business, though, for old black Jim certainly did burn the wind.



## CHAPTER XXXIV

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### A RUN-AWAY GOAT

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EVERYTHING on the farm ran away at some time or other. If we ever owned an animal that didn't run away we found some means to make him do so. Herbert had a big black goat that never minded the whip or coaxing of any kind, but, believe me, he was ticklish! He reminded us of old Brer Possum who said, "Put me in a game whar de's no tickling allowed and I's yo'man." So with this goat.

We rigged up a little two-wheeled cart and for a body used a square tea box. Father always bought tea in wholesale quantities, as he did everything else, and this little box was just the right size for Allene to fit in to. Mame and Dutch were too small to risk it. Herbert wanted to give her a ride, harnessed the goat to the cart and put her in. The broad brimmed hat she wore just fit right to make a good lid for the box, but the goat refused to go. Finally Herbert said, "I'll make him move," and proceeded to tickle him. Away he dashed down the road at break-neck speed, going so fast that Herbert couldn't stop him until he reached the cross-roads some distance away.

Mother gave a prize each Sunday to the one who during the week said the fewest bad words and she left it to each one's honor to make his own report. To make sure that he gave a true statement Herbert took Allene out of the cart, held the goat by the bridle and said, "Allene, I'm going to say every bad word I

know. Now you keep count." He proceeded to tell that goat what he thought of him, for he was nearly out of breath from running and thoroughly outdone. Allene kept count for him and he reported it in due order. He lost the prize that week!





## CHAPTER XXXV

### A MOONLIGHT HUNT

ONE AFTERNOON we were out hunting rabbits near where Bob caught the fox. We had jumped one that got away from us, and it began to look as if we would have to give it up when suddenly Bob let go a sharp quick yelp. In an instant a rabbit darted into a hollow stump near by. The sun had set and night was coming on. Bob seemed to know that we didn't have much time to spare, for the way he grabbed the dirt around the stump was a sight. We rushed up but in his excitement Bob threw the sand so fast and high that it spattered all over our faces and some of it got into my mouth. We backed off but hied him on. He dug and dug and went so deep that all we could see was his hind legs and tail sticking out of the hole and dirt flying in the air. After letting him try faithfully but without success we decided to smoke the rabbit out.

Gathering some dry straw and pine knots we soon had a blaze going. The stump itself was rich pine and burned freely. By this time it was pitch dark except for the light of the half moon that shone dimly. The fire burned low and directly we noticed live coals rolling down into a deep hole on the left. They must have touched the rabbit for it shuffled out for dear life. Then the funniest thing I ever saw happened. As the rabbit jumped through the coals *its tail caught on fire*. This only made old cotton-tail speed up though and he shot by before Bob knew what had happened. Dashing away the rabbit stop-

ped every few feet and dragged its tail on the ground trying to put out the fire. We were laughing so we could hardly run. Bob knew something was happening but never did see the rabbit. Finally the fire on its tail went out and, believe me, that chap made tracks! We didn't follow any further, always agreeing that its freedom was well earned.



## CHAPTER XXXVI

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### A RUN-AWAY

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**H**AVE you ever seen a run-away team? When horses run away somebody is generally hurt, but the best way to handle a run-away team of mules is to hold them in the road. They won't run far and will soon slow down and be as gentle as lambs. But who ever saw an ox run away? I guess nobody but such fellows as we were down on the farm.

When it came to mischief Herbert was the worst one of the boys. Black Joe decided one day that we would borrow Uncle Bob Williams' two-wheeled ox cart, hitch up Jockey and take a ride. Uncle Bob was very careful with his cart and it was only after much coaxing that he agreed to lend it to us on the promise that we be very careful with it. We hitched up and drove down the road stopping near the store in front of the house.

Among the many varieties of pine trees that grow in the low-country is one that has long hard pine burs, covered with sharp prickly points. One of these trees grew near the store. Presently we decided to move on but Jockey balked. We didn't have an umbrella to scare him with and twisting his tail for some reason failed to work on this occasion. Joe, Bury and I were in the cart and Herbert on the ground. Taking in the situation quickly Herbert said, "I'll make him move. Hold up his tail." Maner asked, "What are you going to do?" Herbert said, "Put a pine bur under his tail." Remembering the promise we made Uncle Bob to be careful with the

cart Joe at first objected, saying he was afraid that it would make him run away and break the cart. After awhile, though, realizing that something had to be done, Joe hollowed, "Go ahead, I'll hold him." Somebody raised his tail and Herbert slipped a pine bur under it. Quick as a flash Jockey soused down on the pine bur flinging his tail between his legs until it fairly straightened out under him. Bellowing like he was mad the terrified ox dashed down the road with lightning speed. One by one we were flung out of the cart as the old two-wheeled affair jostled to pieces and was literally strewn down the road. It made him move, all right, but we certainly had a time explaining to Uncle Bob.



## CHAPTER XXXVII

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### GRINDING SUGAR CANE

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SUGAR cane grinding time is the best time of all. Hog-killing time, cotton-picking time, fodder-pulling time are nothing compared with the good old time everybody had when we were grinding cane. The sorghum of the up-country cannot in any way be compared with the blue cane of the low-country. Folks there gain a pound a day at sugar cane grinding time. There are four stages of it with a possible fifth and it is hard to tell which leads the other in genuine joy.

Around the boiler at night with the most appetizing odors in the world coming from the pot, a fellow is not satisfied unless, sitting on a rickety soap box, he is peeling and chewing a stalk of sugar cane. That's the first joy—chewing the cane. One stalk after another and yet the last seems the best. Not satisfied we go over to the cane mill and get a dipper full of cold sweet juice to wind up with. But night is coming on and the boiler is just beginning to simmer. In the hands of an experienced man a strainer clears the pot of the rising sediment while yellow-jackets by the dozen attracted by the sweet fragrance attempt to fly over and dive into the boiling juice. In spite of the fact that we have been chewing cane all day and have just had a good drink of juice, we can't leave until a dipper full of hot juice—the third stage—is enjoyed. Leaving the boiler we go into the house for the fourth—hot waffles with butter and that wonderful fresh syrup! There's always room for one more



CUTTING SUGAR CANE





at sugar cane grinding time and we take one more and then another, and another. Have you ever had indigestion? Well, the way to get relief is to walk back to the boiler and pick up a smooth stalk of cane, make your way back to that rickety soap box and chew away while the Negroes tell Brer Rabbit and Brer Wolf stories. The questionable fifth stage is that which the skimmings reach after setting in a barrel for a week or more,—but the drys have it on us now and maybe the syrup they cook these days don't have any skimmings. But in the good old days when I was a boy after the barrel had stood a while we would take a nail, drill a hole near the bottom of the barrel and by quick work, soon have a glass full of wonderful beer or cider or what-not that came squirting through at lightning speed.

Oh boy! give me the good old days, the sugar cane grinding days, the hot waffles and fresh syrup days, the cane juice days, the cider days we used to have down on the farm when I was a boy. Boys were boys in the good old days of long ago. "Joe, pass the waffles"—"Did anybody bring in any cane tonight?" "Who borrowed my knife?" "Let's go, boys, and hear William tell about Brer Rabbit." "You boys bring in an armful of fat lightwood when you come." "Do, my boys, be careful around that fire." "Good-night."





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